



PROMOTING INDUSTRIAL ZONES AND INVESTMENT MOBILIZATION
USAID WB/G SO1: EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES
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CONFERENCE REPORT: FREEZEX 2003, DUBAI

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TO THE

USAID MISSION TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA
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BY

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1. PRIZIM/PIEFZA FREEZEX 2003 Attendance

PRIZIM Delegates: William Cain – Chief of Party, Daniel Louw – IE/FZ Advisor

PIEFZA Delegates: PIEFZA – Gaza - Ismail Abu Shehada, Abdel Rahman Naim,

PIEFZA – Ramallah - Abdel Rahman Shtayeh.

2. Objectives and Highlights

The delegation had a successful visit to Dubai. The participation of the delegation in all events was energetic and enthusiastic. Additional meetings were also held to develop strategic alliances with other Free Zones in the form of co-operation agreements. The delegation had several objectives in mind at the time of planning the trip to Dubai. These objectives were met in full and highlights are as follows:

- a. **Education and sharing of knowledge** – By attending the conference the delegation met Senior Managers from other successful Zones and Industrial Estates. The PIEFZA and PRIZIM team worked hard over the 5 days to meet as many of the FREEZEX delegates as possible and to share views on best practices and training methods. The conference itself hosted several high level speakers addressing key topics such as: Market Analysis, Free Zone Concepts and Philosophies that work, Attracting FDI into Free Zones, Free Zones Management Models, Benefits of International Standards ISO 9000 & ISO 14000, WTO issues and ports management.
- b. **Benchmarking** – On the second day several Free Zones and Industrial Estates gave presentations on their facilities and services. It was a valuable learning experience for the delegation to measure their standards against the competition in the region. The exhibition also allowed us to see examples of very high standards of marketing materials used by projects from countries such as; Jordan, Egypt, UAE, Panama, Mauritius, China and Brazil.
- c. **Strategic Alliances** PIEFZA attended three very important meetings with the following Free Zones:
 - i. **SAIF Zone** – Sharjah Airport International Free Zone is the fastest growing airport Free Zone in the Middle East. The PIEFZA team met with the Director General of SAIF Zone at the FREEZEX exhibition and again at the Free Zone itself. These meetings were very successful indeed and have resulted in a co-operation agreement between PIEFZA and SAIF Zone that will assist PIEFZA with training and facilities in the Zone. Specifics of the agreement have already been finalized and are now awaiting the signature of the Sharjah Free Zones Chairman, Sheikh Tariq Al Qassimi.
 - ii. **Dubai Airport Free Zone** – Is the home to a new multimillion dollar chip manufacturing facility. The PIEFZA team met with the DAFZ senior managers at the Conference and Exhibition and at the Free Zone as well. These meetings also proved to be very productive and a further co-operation agreement was reached

with PIEFZA and DAFZ. The details of the agreement are being worked out at this time, but the main thrust of assistance will be for training.

iii. Jebel Ali Free Zone – The PIEFZA and PRIZIM team visited Jebel Ali and met with the Managing Director, Mr. Ahmed Butti and the Director of JAFZI, Mr. Chuck Heath. JAFZ has agreed to a twinning and co-operation agreement. The details will be worked out in the next week with the assistance of Chuck Heath, PIEFZA and PRIZIM. The Business Linkages program was also discussed at length in the meeting. JAFZI also expressed full support for this initiative.

d. Type of assistance – All three free Zones have committed to assist either with training or some form of representational facility in the UAE.

e. Training – Based on the discussions between TSG-PRIZIM and the Free Zones in Sharjah and Dubai last March, it is clear that the initial SOW for training of the PIEFZA team in the UAE could now proceed with maximum support from all parties.

3. Conclusions

The attendance of this event has been a valuable investment for USAID and PIEFZA. All participants have benefited from the trip through the formation of formal ties with other zones in the region, the generation of contacts, and the observation of successful Free Zones operations at first hand. The significance of these alliances with regional Free Zones will help the profile of PIEFZA and the products that it is developing.

The participation at such future events is recommended. PIEFZA is preparing a report, with PRIZIM assistance, for USAID on its accomplishments during the conference.

It is recommended that training programs under the initial scope of work for PIEFZA team members in UAE be approved for implementation. The focus of the training will be to further enhance the organizational capacity of PIEFZA.

It is recommended that PIEFZA issue a press release on the same. PRIZIM staff is currently developing ideas on PR that will be discussed with PIEFZA next week.